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SIPDIS

STATE FOR P AND EUR/BRADTKE

REQUEST STATE OPS PASS TO EMBASSY BAGHDAD, DOD/OSD/ISP
BRZEZINSKI, MNF-I GENERAL CASEY, CENTCOM GENERAL ABIZAID AND
POLAD, AND NSC SCHAKE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/14/15

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [IT](#) [IZ](#) [IRAQI](#) [FREEDOM](#)

SUBJECT: CALIPARI: ITALY PROPOSES SPLITTING JOINT REPORT FROM
NJF-I AR 15-6 INVESTIGATION

Classified By: Ambassador Sembler for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

1. (S) SUMMARY: Italian government officials tell us they will refuse signature or endorsement as a "joint report" of any MNF-I AR 15-6 investigation contains the unqualified conclusion that personal responsibility for the killing cannot be assigned and U.S. forces did not violate their ROE. They say a political backlash that could lead to withdrawal of Italian forces from Iraq, however, agree to a binational "joint report" restricted to findings of AR 15-6 investigation, with conclusions and follow-up actions to be reported to U.S. and Italian national authorities by their respective investigating authorities via submission of the AR 15-6 report to the appointing authority). END

2. (S) Late on April 13 Undersecretary in the Prime Minister's Office General Pollari (External Intelligence Service) Chief General Pollari discussed with DCM the reluctance of Italian investigators in Baghdad to agree with counterparts on concluding language of a joint investigative report into the killing of Calipari in Iraq. Repeating arguments he and Berlusconi made to President Bush during the President's recent visit to Rome, Letta said it was politically impossible for the Government of Italy to sign on to a report concluding that personal responsibility for the Calipari killing could not be assigned to U.S. forces, as desired by U.S. investigators. The report would be interpreted as a whitewash by the opposition and the political opposition would eventually force the withdrawal of Italian troops from Iraq (a point Letta repeated later in the conversation).

3. (S) Ambassador and DCM repeated to Letta and Pollari a point they had made many times previously: MNF-I was carrying out an investigation under paragraph 15-6 of the Army Regulation 15-6, and no U.S. official outside the investigation could interfere in this independent inquiry. The Italians took the point but what they described as management of the political implications of the investigation. That investigation had been endorsed by President Bush in an exchange of letters between Letta and the Embassy. Letta and Pollari said Italian and U.S. investigators had reached broad agreement on the facts of the AR 15-6 report, and expressed understanding for the requirement of investigators to reach a clear-cut conclusion based on those facts. That if the language to which they objected appeared in the conclusion of the report would be more politically palatable for the Italian side to decline to accept the report as a whole.

4. (S) After extensive discussion, Letta and Pollari proposed that a way to break out of the impasse might be to break out the binational report from the USA AR 15-6 investigation and confine this separate "joint report" solely to the fact-finding portion of the investigation. The explanation would be that both countries had agreed on the facts of Calipari's death to the extent they were ascertainable, the investigators agreed findings to their respective national authorities in a joint report, and it was now up to those national authorities to draw the conclusions, including about any follow-up actions. The vehicle for the investigators to report to higher authorities would be the AR 15-6 report document separate from the "joint report" could contain conclusions or recommendations that had not necessarily been agreed to by the Italian government. The fact that this was consistent with the original terms of the investigation, which called for both countries to "ascertain the dynamics through "investigative fact-finding" but which made no mention of drawing conclusions or making recommendations.

5. (S) While this was not an ideal outcome, Letta and Pollari believed this approach under the circumstances. Pollari said it might be advisable for them to keep their conclusions confidential, but Ambassador and DCM cautioned investigating officers conducting an AR 15-6 investigation had a responsibility to make recommendations to the appointing authority, that appointing authority if further action was required, and it would be impractical to do all that Letta and Pollari did not challenge this approach, as long as it was clearly being done as part of the "national" AR 15-6 process, as distinct from "binational" fact-finding investigation. Ambassador and DCM advised the Government of Italy wished to pursue its idea of separating the "joint" investigation reports, that idea should be presented by the Italian par investigation to their USA counterparts in Baghdad.

6. (S) Regarding the rollout strategy for whatever joint investigative report issued, in response to Ambassador's request Letta confirmed that Italia Ragolini and Campregher would be asked to stay in Baghdad until report issued. He would not commit, however, to having them appear together with U.S. officials at public announcement of the report Q that would depend on what was to be announced. If there was full agreement ahead of time on a joint report to be said at the rollout, then it would be good for officials from both countries to be present. If not, however, it would be better to keep the U.S. and Italian reports separate. Otherwise the media would press the American and Italian officials together to disagree publicly on some detail, and that would become the

of subsequent domestic political pressure on the Italian government. P
personal opinion that the best date for a rollout would be Tuesday or W
week.

17. (S) Letta rebuffed the Ambassador's request that he designate Italia
other officials to begin working now with Embassy Rome press and politi
contingency press guidance and Q's and A's. He insisted that we first
agreement on a joint report, so that we knew what it was we would be co
Only after this was achieved would it make sense to start working on sh
and guidance.

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